



Volusia United Educators Response to District Email 10/16/25

Today, the district sent an email “Instructional Compensation Info: 3.3% Monetary Increase, Bereavement Details” to all staff. While the information in the correspondence may look good to those who have not been following the negotiations process, the math doesn’t add up for our members.

Please see the clarifications that we have provided below.

- *“All instructional staff will earn a minimum of a 2.5% monetary increase this year under the current proposal.” - 2.5% for everyone this year is only achieved by including the 1% bonus that disappears next year. The bonus is taxed at a higher rate than salary enhancements or adjustments and does not contribute to your pension. Long term this equates to less than 2% for about 15% of the personnel in the instructional unit. Keep in mind, district level employees received a recurring 2% salary increase. We are still waiting to learn what the members of the Cabinet and Superintendent will receive for salary increases for the 2025-26 year.*
- *“A 0.65% salary increase through the Teacher Salary Increase Allocation (TSIA), which reflects a 0.54% increase to the FEFP base funding.” -The TSIA money is only for instructional personnel with 2 or more years of service. About 500 individuals will not receive this money.*
- *“A one-time, non-recurring 1% salary bonus for all instructional staff.” - Again, this money does nothing to build your retirement, and it will be taxed at a higher rate. It is here today, and gone tomorrow.*
- *“Two days of paid bereavement leave.” – We find it to be highly offensive and disingenuous that our employer would include the potential cost of bereavement leave as part of the salary package. First, VCS will provide this union negotiated benefit to all employees. Next, we would expect that providing paid time to grieve the loss of a loved one is not considered a salary increase but a recognition of basic human decency. To suggest that time to attend a funeral or to comfort one’s family somehow counts toward “total compensation” is a deliberate distortion of what a salary increase means.*
- *“Redistribution of \$17.6 million in salary enhancements (e.g., advanced degree, retention) to benefit the entire bargaining unit.” This statement suggests that VCS is proposing we nullify the collaborative effort of the Salary Committee who developed these enhancements to BEGIN addressing salary comprehension for instructional staff. **This amount needs to be increased, or we move backwards on salary***

compression! Capping this money and moving it around is a shell game that would result in a pay cut for many mid-career and veteran teachers.

- *“When combined, this package represents a 3.3% monetary increase, and with bereavement leave included, the total value rises to 3.44%.”* Again, including an extra .14% if an immediate family member dies as a “total value rise” demonstrates the lack of empathy, compassion, and kindness that the authors of this proposal have for the employees.

We are concerned about this email for the reasons shared above and additionally, because although this was sent to “All Staff”, and specifically mentioned instructional salaries, there is no mention of the salary negotiations for support staff. We believe that all employees contribute to the success of our students and our district. Additionally, we are questioning the catalyst of the email, unless this is their response to our outstanding efforts to raise awareness of the salary offer during Tuesday’s demonstration during the board meeting and the comments made by our members during public participation.

As always, if you have any questions or if you need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In Solidarity,
Elizabeth Albert